

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 are pending in the application. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration in view of the remarks set forth below.

Applicants point out that the Examiner has only referred to claims 1-2 in the office action. Applicants note that claim 3 was added in the amendment filed on May 7, 2003. Accordingly, claims 1-3 are pending in the application.

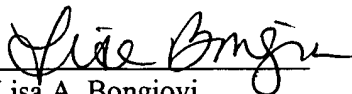
Claims 1-2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Shannon et al. (U.S. 6,542,138) ("Shannon"). Shannon has a filing date (102(e)) date of September 11, 2000. The priority date for this Application is September 29, 1999. As noted by the Examiner in the office action, Applicants have properly claimed priority in this Application and have also submitted the priority document on November 16, 2000. Applicants also submit herewith a certified English translation of the priority document. Accordingly, Applicants have properly perfected priority and have antedated the reference. Applicants respectfully request that the reference be removed as prior art against the application. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the instant application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this application be allowed and a Notice of Allowance issued. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicants' attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is cordially requested to telephone the undersigned.

In the event the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks deems additional fees to be due in connection with this application, Applicants' attorney hereby authorizes that such fee be charged to Deposit Account No. 06-1130.

Respectfully submitted,

CANTOR COLBURN LLP

By: 

Lisa A. Bongiovi
Registration No. 48,933
CANTOR COLBURN LLP
55 Griffin Road South
Bloomfield, CT 06002
Telephone (860) 286-2929
Facsimile (860) 286-0115
Customer No. 23413

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